

Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

PROCEEDINGS

OF

THE ANNIVERSARY MEETING

OF

THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY,

HELD ON SATURDAY, THE 9TH OF MAY, 1835.

THE Twelfth Anniversary Meeting was held this day at one o'clock; the Right Honourable CHARLES WATKIN WILLIAMS WYNN, M.P., the President of the Society, in the chair.

The Minutes of the last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The Secretary then read the Twelfth Annual Report of the Council. (Vide p. xxiii).

The Report of the Auditors was read by Lieut.-Colonel Doyle. (Vide p. xxvi).

Colonel BLACKBURNE observed, that the careful attention displayed by the auditors in their report was so evident, that it required no eulogy from him. He should, therefore, simply beg to move that the thanks of the Society be given to those gentlemen for their services; and that their Report, together with that of the Council, be received and printed. This motion was seconded by Sir Henry Willock, and carried unanimously.

Lieut.-Colonel DOYLE, in returning thanks on behalf of himself and brother Auditors, said, that although the general aspect of the Society's affairs was one of congratulation, it certainly would have been more agreeable could the Auditors have shewn a better state on the credit side of the Society's accounts; yet still he had no doubt that by active exertion the pecuniary means of the Society might soon be placed in a prosperous condition. He did not imagine, however, that any great reduction could be made in the expenditure of the Society, and, at the same time, allow the accommodation to members which was now afforded. But there was a mode by which these difficulties might be overcome. If gentlemen would only "put their shoulders to the wheel" by explaining the objects of the Society to their friends, and increase the number of contributing members, and also direct their efforts with a view to the procuring of public accommodation for the Society in some of the government buildings likely soon to be vacant; by such means the funds of the Institution would soon flourish. He trusted, however, that the next year's audit would be more favourable. It appeared, too, that a sum of three hundred and eighty pounds was due to the Society by the Oriental Translation Fund, an institution closely connected with the Society. It was an old adage, "that short reckonings made long friends;" and, for his part, he thought, that the sooner an adjustment of this account took place the better.

Sir ALEXANDER JOHNSTON, chairman of the Committee of Correspondence, read a memorandum enumerating the principal subjects which had engaged the attention of the Committee during the past year.

Sir Alexander then observed, in substance,[1] as follows:—

"From the statement I have just read, the meeting will see that during the last year the Committee have directed their inquiries to two subjects in particular: first, to the collecting of materials for compiling a history of the peninsula of India, south of the river Krishna; secondly, to the best means of introducing the sciences of Europe amongst the Hindú population of that part of India. With a view to the first, they have taken measures for ascertaining the value and extent of the materials which compose the Mackenzie collection; and for procuring such further materials as may be necessary to the completion of this work through the medium of the Hindú Society of literature at Madras, of which Lutchmiah, the late Colonel Mackenzie's head assistant, is the president.[2] The part of India to which these inquiries refer, is bounded on the north by the river Krishna, on the south by Cape Comorin, on the east by the coast of Coromandel, and on the west by the coast of Malabar; and contains a superficies of about 140,000 square miles. This tract of country is of moral, commercial, and political interest, as well from its topography, population, languages, religious and civil institutions, agriculture, manufactures, and commerce, as from its ancient and modern history. The great chain of mountains, known by the name of the Eastern and Western Ghâts, separate the two coasts of this peninsula, the western coast being open to the south-west, the eastern coast to the north-east monsoon. Where the mountains ascend above a certain height, neither the south-west nor the north-east monsoon breaks over them; but where they are below a certain height, both monsoons break over them. In the Paligautcherry Pass, and in the Gulph of Manár, the influence of this chain of mountains, and of these two monsoons, is, independent of many other local circumstances, very great, both upon the vegetable and animal productions; and produces a greater variety in this part of India than is any where to be found in the same space within the tropics, as is fully shewn, as well by the difference between the productions on the coast of Malabar, and those on the coast of Coromandel, as by the production of the pearl oyster, of the chank-shell, and of the different modifications of coral in the gulf of Manár. The population consists of the different descriptions of people who inhabit the Neilgherry and other mountains; of the Hindú people who inhabit the low-lands, of the descendants of the Moguls and Arabs, and of people of the different nations of Europe who have from time to time established themselves in the several parts of the country. I must here mention that we are indebted to our secretary for an interesting description of the former people.

"There are four principal languages; the Telugu, which extends from the Northern Circars to Pulicat, and which, from its softness, bears the same relation to the other languages in that part of India, as the Italian does to the languages of the rest of Europe; the Tamil, which extends from Pulicat to Cape Comorin, and which has a system of literature peculiar to itself, originating with the people amongst whom it is spoken; the Malayal'ma, which extends from Cape Comorin to Mount Dilli on the Malabar coast; and the Canarese, which extends from that mountain to the Concan, and throughout the Mysore territories. All four languages may be said to belong to one family, because they have the same roots, although they differ so much in other respects as not to be intelligible to the people who do not belong to the countries in which they are respectively spoken. They are not of the same family with the Sanskrit, because they

[1] As Sir Alexander was requested to reduce his observations to writing, we here only give such as were collected on the occasion.

[2] It is thought advisable, with reference to what Sir Alexander here, and in other parts of his observations alludes to, and to the difficulty which the public must necessarily experience in referring to the voluminous proceedings of the House of Commons relative to the renewal of the East India Company's charter, to give, attached to the report of this day's proceedings, a copy of his evidence before the House, wherein he specifically mentions the great value of the materials contained in the Mackenzie collection. (See page xxx).

differ in their roots from that language, though they all contain a great many words derived from the Sanskrit. I am indebted to our secretary, who has devoted so much of his attention to the people and language of the Neilgherry hills, and to the people of southern India generally, for a very curious fact relative to these languages. He tells me, if you extract from them all the words that are Sanskrit, you leave a language similar to the one which is at present spoken by the people of those hills.

"The religions which prevail in the Peninsula of India are the Brahmanical, the Budd'ha, the Jain, the Mohammedan, the Jewish, and the Christian, in all its subdivisions of Nestorians, Catholics, and Protestants. Of the institutions, that which particularly attracts the attention of the statesman and the moralist, is the division of caste, which, whatever merit or demerit it may possess, must be looked upon as a great moral and political engine by which an able statesman may produce the greatest moral and political changes amongst the Hindús of India. There is a complete system of literature in the Tamil language, quite independent of that which belongs to the Sanskrit, containing works of its own on logic, metaphysics, ethics, and physics. A system of agriculture has been maintained from time immemorial, with the greatest care, by the construction of magnificent tanks or reservoirs for receiving and distributing the rain-water where there are no permanent rivers; and by the erection of stupendous artificial mounds for directing and changing the course of rivers, and distributing their waters in those parts of the country through which the great rivers take their course in their progress from the mountains to the sea. Barnard's map of the Jághír affords a fine illustration of the first; and the map in this Society of the course of the Caveri, through the Tanjore country, of the latter. The muslins, and various other articles, shew to what perfection the people of the country can attain in their manufactures; the quantity of coarse cloths formerly made in the southern provinces shew to what extent the demand may exist for the manufactures of those provinces, even in the most distant parts of the world; for, in former days, the Dutch brought gold-dust from Sumatra, and other places to the eastward, then coined it into pagodas at Tutakorin, and with them purchased the cloths of the southern provinces, which, after being conveyed to Holland, and sold at Amsterdam, were painted at Bâsle, and other places in Switzerland, and then conveyed from Barcelona and Cadiz to all the Spanish colonies in South America.

"From the eastern coast, the people of the Peninsula carried on a trade with all the places in the Bay of Bengal, with all the eastern islands, and even with China; from the western coast, they carried on a trade with the Persian and Arabian gulfs, and through them with all the countries in Asia Minor and in Europe. This trade was coveted by every nation in Europe from the most ancient times, and was the object which, by leading Columbus to look for a short passage to the East, led him to the discovery of America; and that which, by leading Vasco de Gama to seek for a passage round the Cape of Good Hope, led him to the discovery of the passage by sea from Europe to India; and the great navigators who succeeded him, to the discovery of New Holland and all the places that have been since discovered in those regions.

"It was in consequence of the great importance that attached to an authentic history of this part of India, that the late Colonel Mackenzie first determined to make his collection. The following are the circumstances which led him to turn his mind to the subject. The present province of Madura, known in the days of the Romans by the appellation of the Regio Pandionis, had attracted great notice in those days, and an embassy was sent from the Pándyán kings to Augustus Cæsar at Rome. Even at that time the people of that country had a general system of education, a very extensive Tamil literature, and a college of great celebrity; literary merit was so highly esteemed by them as to overcome the feeling of caste; for Tiruvaluver, the author of many distinguished works in that language, though a Pariah by birth, was, owing to his literary attainments, elected, not only a member, but even the president of the college

at Madura, of which men of the highest caste, and highest distinction, were proud to belong. The same province became equally well known in Europe in the end of the sixteenth, and beginning of the seventeenth century, by the proceedings of the celebrated Jesuit mission, which was established at Madura by Robertus de Nobilibus, who was distinguished by his talents, and by the thorough knowledge he had acquired of the Sanskrit and Tamil languages; and who seems to have intended, had his plans succeeded, to have founded a college at that place, for the purpose of disseminating the principles of the Christian religion, and the sciences of Europe, through the country, in the same manner as a knowledge of Tamil literature had been circulated through the same country, by the ancient Tamil college established at that place. The province of Madura again became an object of literary interest in the eighteenth century, in consequence of my grandfather, the fifth Lord Napier, of Merchiston, having determined to write the life of his ancestor, John Napier of Merchiston, and to prefix to it a history of the knowledge which the people of India had of mathematics. It appearing by John Napier's papers, that he had, from the information he obtained during his travels, adopted the opinion, that numerals had first been discovered by the college of Madura, and that they had been introduced from India by the Arabs into Spain, and into other parts of Europe, Lord Napier was anxious to examine the sources from whence John Napier had derived his information upon this subject, and when he himself was abroad visited Venice and other places in Italy, in which he thought it was likely he should find an account of the information collected by the members of the Jesuit mission at Madura, upon this and other parts of Hindú science. Having been successful in obtaining some interesting documents relative to the object of his researches, he returned to Scotland, and submitted them to the then Mr. Mackenzie (afterwards Colonel Mackenzie), who had been recommended to him by Lord Seaforth, as a young man who had devoted himself to the study of mathematics. Lord Napier died before he had completed his life of John Napier, and Mr. Mackenzie, whose mind had been turned to the subject of Hindu science by Lord Napier, applied for, and obtained through Lord Seaforth, a commission in the East India Company's Engineers, on the Madras establishment, in order that he might have a favourable opportunity of prosecuting at Madura, the site of the ancient Hindú college, his inquiries into the knowledge which the Hindús possessed, in early days, of arithmetic, and the different branches of mathematics. On Mr. Mackenzie's arrival at Madras, finding that my father and mother (the latter being the daughter of his patron, Lord Napier, and then engaged in completing the life which had been commenced by her father), were stationed at Madura, where my father held a political situation of high trust under his friend Lord Macartney, he obtained leave from Lord Macartney, the then Governor of Madras, to join them. As soon as Mr. Mackenzie reached Madura, he began his inquiries relative to the ancient Hindú college of that place; and, in conjunction with my father and mother, formed the plan of reviving, under the protection of the English government, the Hindú college. In furtherance of this plan, my father having obtained from the Nabob of Arcot, the then sovereign of the country, some deserted ruins in the jungle, about a mile from the fort of Madura, which were supposed to have been connected in former days with the proceedings of the Hindú college, built upon them, at considerable expense, the house which has ever since been known at that place by the name of Johnston House, and which is still my property, laying out its different compartments, under the direction of Mr. Mackenzie, in such a manner as might best suit the adaptation of it as a building in which the mathematical instruction that Mr. Mackenzie wished to be circulated amongst all the natives of the country might be pursued. The pillars which supported this house were divided into six compartments, upon each of which all the diagrams were to be carved which were necessary to illustrate a course of arithmetic, geometry, mechanics, hydrostatics, optics, and astronomy, there being a building erected upon the roof, in which plane and spherical trigonometry were to be taught; two orreries

were to be erected, the one illustrating the Ptolemaic, the other the Copernican, system of the universe, and lectures were to be given in Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, and Canarese, pointing out the superior utility of the Copernican over the Ptolemaic system, and the great practical utility to which the sciences of Europe might be applied in every department of practical knowledge. Mr. Mackenzie, shortly after he had finished this building for my father, was obliged to quit Madura on account of the public service, and the plan of the college was, owing to his absence, not then carried into effect. Mr. Mackenzie, some years afterwards, on passing through Madura in 1796, on his way to superintend the siege of Columbo, had extensive communications with several persons in the province of Madura, and in the other southern provinces, as to the practicability of recovering all the ancient histories of Madura, and of the other places in the south of the peninsula; and, in consequence of the result of such communication, formed a regular plan, which he studiously carried on for twenty-five years, for making the immense collection of historical materials, which forms the present Mackenzie Collection. In 1816, Colonel Mackenzie, finding his health rapidly declining, and anxious to leave some account of his collection behind him, in case of his death, asked me, with whom he had been acquainted from my earliest youth, to meet him at Madras, when he addressed a letter to me, which has been since published,[1] giving me a general view of his researches in India; with a request, that I would, in case of his dying before he had been able to arrange and publish a more detailed account of his collection, have it printed and published in such a manner as I might think proper. As I returned to England soon after, I mentioned the whole subject to the late Mr. Charles Grant, who was then chairman of the Court of Directors, and he, in consequence of the circumstances which I mentioned to him, determined to propose to the court, that Colonel Mackenzie should be permitted to come to England, on his full pay and allowances, and remain in England three years, for the purpose of arranging and publishing such an account of the materials he had collected, as would enable some person to write from them an authentic history, ancient and modern, of the southern peninsula of India. However, accounts of Colonel Mackenzie's death having reached England some time after, no further steps were taken upon the subject. I published the letter which Colonel Mackenzie had addressed to me, and wrote to Lord Hastings, the then Governor-General of British India, pointing out to him the great expense Colonel Mackenzie had been at in making the collection, amounting to upwards of 15,000*l.*, and expressing my opinion of the great utility of which such a collection might be to the British government of India. Lord Hastings having ascertained upon the spot the value and extent of this collection, with his usual liberality and feeling for all scientific and literary pursuits, purchased it from Colonel Mackenzie's widow for 10,000*l.* A catalogue of it, in two volumes, has been made by Mr. Wilson, the Professor of Sanskrit at Oxford; one portion of the collection is in the Company's library in England, the other portion is in India. On the inquiries which took place before Parliament, two years ago, relative to British India, I was examined before a Committee of the House as to this collection; and felt it to be my duty, not only to express my opinion as to its value, but to point out the necessity of measures being immediately taken by the British government for enabling the two Houses of Legislature to avail themselves of the information contained in it, by employing our secretary, Captain Harkness, and Lutchmiah, Colonel Mackenzie's native head-assistant, for completing and translating this collection in such a manner as Colonel Mackenzie would have done had he lived,—a step the more necessary owing to the age of Lutchmiah, and the impossibility, if any thing should happen to him or Captain Harkness, of finding any persons who were so capable as these gentlemen are, from their knowledge of Colonel Mackenzie's plans, of attaining the object which the legislature must have in view regarding this

[1] See Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, vol. i. p. 333.

collection. Mr. Stewart Mackenzie, then a member of the Board of Control, and chairman of the committee, in the report of the committee, pointedly called the attention of the House to this subject.

"Conceiving that no time ought to be lost in taking such measures as might be requisite for completing in India the parts of the collection which might be defective, soon after I had been examined before the committee, I wrote out to Lutchmiah at Madras, enclosing him a copy of my evidence, and suggesting to him the propriety of his forming a native Literary Society at Madras, for assisting the Royal Asiatic Society in collecting the information which they might require to complete the Mackenzie collection. Lutchmiah has formed a native Literary Society at Madras, consisting of a great many zealous and well-informed Hindûs, whose object is to collect such useful information relative to India as may be required, and to adopt such means as may be necessary for introducing the sciences of Europe amongst the natives of the southern parts of India; and has sent to us a printed copy of the regulations of that Society, which do honour to the zeal and good sense of the Society, and which are likely, if the Society be properly supported by the local government, to further the cause of science and literature throughout every part of the country. The council have, at the same time, at my suggestion, applied to the Court of Directors, to allow Captain Harkness to examine the part of the collection which is at the India House library, and ascertain what steps should be taken for publishing such portions of it as are completed, and for completing such portions as are still defective; it appears, by the report which Captain Harkness has already drawn up, a copy of which will, I trust, be attached to the proceedings of this day,[1] that the most authentic information relative to every part of the Southern Peninsula is to be found in this collection; that it contains, either in facsimiles or copies, between 9000 and 10,000 inscriptions, on copper or stone; and that he himself is of opinion, that it affords the most ample materials for writing an authentic history of the whole of the southern peninsula of India.

"From these circumstances, it is obvious that the Mackenzie collection does afford documents illustrative of what I have already described as one of the most important parts of our Indian possessions.

"With respect to the other subject of inquiry, the Committee of Correspondence have taken such measures as may be necessary to ascertain the best means of introducing in a more direct manner the sciences of Europe amongst the Hindûs of the south of India. With a view to this point, they have inquired what degree of science they had attained in former days; what degree of encouragement was then held out to those amongst them who cultivated literature; and whether, raising their character by increasing their knowledge, is likely to increase their respect for, and attachment to, the British government.

"Science is employed in contemplating either the operations of the human understanding, the exercise of our moral powers, or the nature and qualities of external objects. When employed in the first, it is called logic and metaphysics; in the second, ethics; and in the third, physics. The committee have, therefore, endeavoured to ascertain the extent of the progress which the Hindûs of India had, at any one time, made in each of those branches of science. It finds ample evidence in different parts of the poem called the *Mahábhárat*, that they had made about the same progress in logic and metaphysics when that poem was written, which is supposed to have been 1500 years before the Christian era, as the Greeks and Romans had made during the most enlightened period of their history: and it is, therefore, fair to infer, that they had attained great accuracy in defining their ideas, and in drawing correct conclusions from their definitions in the more ancient times; for a poem that was so popular as it was amongst the Hindus, must, in order to have been so, have contained modes of reasoning and opinions which were generally understood, and generally liked by the people amongst whom the poem was circulated. It is, therefore, fair to infer, that a poem of this sort, for the reasons I have just mentioned, affords the best evidence

[1] See page xxxvi.

which can be obtained of the opinions which were in general circulation in the country at the time the poem was written. The science of ethics has for its object to ascertain the difference between virtue and vice; the motives by which we ought to be guided; and the general rules for regulating our conduct in society. This science, judging by the opinions of the author of the *Mahábhárat*, seems to have attained amongst the Hindús the same degree of perfection 1500 years before the Christian era, as it did in Greece and Rome during the best days of the Stoic philosophy. In the science of law, the Hindús, according to the institutes of Menu, and their most ancient law-tracts, seem to have made as great a progress in the earliest times, as the Greeks seem to have done in the days of Justinian; and to have exceeded the Greeks, and even the Europeans of the middle ages, in that branch of it which related to commerce; the laws of the Greeks and the laws of the English having, up to the seventeenth century, restricted the allowance of interest on all contracts to a fixed sum without any exception whatever—the Hindú law, on the contrary, always making a distinct exception in cases of adventures at sea; though such an exception had never been made in the laws of England till the time of Charles I., when a knowledge of the true principles of commerce had made great progress in England.

"In physics, the progress of the Hindús seems to have been equally remarkable in the earliest period of their history. In arithmetic, they were always believed to be the first who adopted the system of notation by ten numerals, instead of following that of noting by the letters of the alphabet. The mode of noting by ten numerals, which consists in giving the figures a particular value or a particular power, according to the relative position in which they are placed, is an invention of the greatest importance from its simplicity and its ingenuity, and from the effect which it has had in promoting and facilitating the progress of science. It was known to the Hindús, though unknown to the Greeks and Romans, who always used the letters of the alphabet, instead of numerals, in their calculations; and the notation by numerals was first introduced into Europe by the Arabs, when they conquered Spain in the seventh and eighth centuries, and though at present so universally used, was at first confined to scientific persons, and not introduced into the common transactions of life until two or three centuries afterwards. This knowledge of numerals, for which Europeans are indebted to the Hindús of India, assisted Napier in his discovery of logarithms; Kepler, in his calculations of the orbits of the planets; Sir Isaac Newton, in all the sublime calculations which he made with respect to the system of the universe; and La Place, in the celebrated discoveries which he made in very recent times. It is generally observed, that where a people have made great progress in arithmetic, they have also made great progress in other branches of science, arithmetic being the great engine through which such progress is made. For some years the world was not aware of the great progress which the Hindús had made in other branches of science, although they were perfectly aware of the progress they had made in arithmetic. Laloubere, a man of great research, who was sent by Louis XIV. on a mission to Siam, was the first person who in modern days brought to Europe any document shewing the nature of the Hindú astronomical tables. He brought to France a copy of the Siamese table, which was a subject of a good deal of consideration to the astronomer Casini. The French subsequently brought to Europe the Hindú astronomical tables found at Krishnapuram, those found at Narsapúr, and, finally, those found at Trivalore, a place twelve miles to the west of Negapatnam; these three places are all situated in the southern peninsula of India. The astronomical tables found at Trivalore are supposed to have been formed upon observations made 3000 years before the Christian era,—a fact which Bailly and Playfair both conceived to be proved, as they found, upon calculating back to the time when these tables were supposed to have been formed, that the situation of the heavenly bodies must have been precisely such as described in these tables. Bailly and Playfair also remark, that the Hindús could not have formed these tables without an extensive knowledge of geometry, and of plane and spherical trigonometry, or of some substitute

for them. It is also remarked, that these tables must have been formed at some of the places in the Southern Peninsula, which are situated between the Hindú meridian, which runs through Cape Comorin, and that which runs through the eastern part of Ceylon, and, consequently, not far from Madura, the ancient seat of the celebrated Hindú college. From what has been said, as to the great progress made by the Hindús in logic, in ethics, and in physics, it is obvious, that the Hindús are capable, if properly instructed, of attaining the highest degrees of knowledge and science.

"With respect to the motives which are likely to stimulate them to direct their attention to science, it appears, if we refer to the literary age of Vikramáditya, in the north of India, and to that of the Hindú College of the south of India, that the rewards which were held out for the encouragement of literature were public honours and distinctions. We have evidence that the love of public honours and distinctions is at this moment one of the strongest motives for exertion amongst the Hindús, this is proved by the avidity with which such of them as have been appointed under the new act, king's justices of the peace, have claimed from government, and received the honorary title of esquire, and by their having applied to Sir Charles Forbes to have seals made for them in this country, with arms engraved upon them descriptive of their families, and of the manner in which they, or their ancestors, have distinguished themselves.

"With respect to the feelings which they are likely to entertain for the individuals who have taken means for raising them, either by a scientific education, or by conferring upon them political rights and privileges, we have evidence in their affection for and conduct towards Sir Charles Forbes. If we refer to the proceedings of parliament when Sir Charles Forbes, fortunately for the natives of India, had a seat in the House of Commons, or to the proceedings of the Court of Proprietors of East India Stock, we invariably find the name of Sir Charles Forbes associated with every measure that is calculated to raise and protect the natives of India. The natives of Bombay, some time ago, sent to England a petition to the House of Commons, signed by between four and five thousand inhabitants of all the different religious sects, and of all the different castes of the inhabitants of that presidency, asking for those privileges and rights which they think of importance to themselves. They wished this petition to be entrusted to a person of whose friendly feelings to them they were all thoroughly convinced; and though the persons signing it differ from one another upon every other point, they all agreed in this one, that Sir Charles Forbes, from his invariable conduct in endeavouring to raise them in society, was the fittest person to patronise this petition.[1] Sir Charles Forbes has lately given a copy of this petition to the Society; it is a curious document, from the number of autograph signatures to it of people of all religious persuasions and castes at Bombay; and enables me to produce the strongest evidence which can be afforded, of the feelings which the natives of India will always entertain for an individual, or a government, who may take measures for raising their moral and political character.

"From all these circumstances I am authorised to conclude, that the Hindús of the Peninsula of India, having, in former days, when properly encouraged, made the greatest progress in science and literature, may at present, if so encouraged, make equal progress: that public honours and distinctions were the cause of that progress in former days; that public honours and distinctions may be rendered an efficient cause of the same progress in the present day; and that the government which endeavours to raise their character will be looked upon by them as deserving of full confidence and affection. Of this we have the strongest proof in the history of Akbar. That great and enlightened sovereign, after the

[1] As this document, written by the natives themselves in three different languages, in order that all those who signed it might be aware of its contents, affords a curious illustration of the present views of the people of India, a copy of it is inserted in this Journal.

most minute inquiry into the character of his Hindú subjects, declared them to be as worthy of his protection and encouragement as his Muhammedan subjects; and his celebrated minister, Abulfazl, after an equally attentive observation of their character and capacity, declared them to be persons worthy of the greatest respect and highest confidence; and a people who had attained the greatest distinction in arts, science, and literature. Upon these views the Emperor Akbar, during a very long reign, acted towards the Hindús, and received from them, at his death, the title of "Guardian of Mankind."

Sir George Staunton rose to move a vote of thanks to Sir Alexander Johnston for his very able Report, accompanied by a request that he would reduce his observations to writing, in order that they might be printed in the Journal. He said he felt assured that every one who had listened to that Report, and who was aware of the important services which Sir Alexander had rendered to the Society from year to year since its first institution, must be happy to take this mode of conveying to him the expression of the grateful feeling of the Society, and its wish that the very valuable information he had given them should be preserved in a permanent shape on its records. He thought it would be a waste of words to detain them longer in direct support of the motion; but he felt it to be his duty, looking to the interests and future welfare of the Society, to draw their attention to the advantage it would derive from so excellent an example being more generally followed. While the Society comprised within its limits so many distinguished individuals, capable, from their talents and experience, of promoting in a similar manner the important objects for which it was instituted, it was to be hoped that they would not suffer their powers to remain dormant, but exert them with the same zeal and perseverance as exhibited by his right honourable friend. Sir George said he felt more anxious at this moment to draw the attention of the meeting to the expediency of increased exertions on behalf of the Society, as it seemed to him that it had now arrived at what might be considered a critical period of its existence, at its twelfth anniversary. It was a matter of congratulation that it was now completely organised, and that it included in its lists almost every distinguished name, native as well as foreign, in Oriental literature. It was now not merely a literary and scientific institution for the interchange of useful and agreeable information among its own members, but it evidently possessed powers of collecting and diffusing information respecting the condition and interests of our vast Indian possessions, the cultivation of which was of great public and national importance. But it was impossible that these powers could be fully developed in the publication of the numerous communications they had received, and in the suitable disposal for general benefit of their increasing library and museum, without some public assistance. It was obvious that, with every private exertion that could be made, the Society must languish in comparative inefficiency without some kind of national support. He ventured, therefore, respectfully to appeal to the members of the Society who were of his Majesty's privy council, and especially our distinguished president, whose representations of its claim to suitable apartments for its accommodation, whenever any were at the disposal of government, he felt convinced, whatever political party might be in power, must ultimately be listened to. He hoped he might also venture to make a similar appeal to the directors of the East India Company who were members of the Society; well knowing that the liberality of the Company, when appealed to on just and public grounds, had never been wanting. The government and the Company could not but feel, that such an association of talent for the diffusion of knowledge connected with our Eastern possessions, was an instrument in their hands that they could not create; but which, since it now existed, it was most desirable, as well as politic, to foster and cherish for the public benefit.

Sir George said he could not sit down without adverting to the lamented loss of the Rev. Dr. Morrison, noticed in the Council's Report. Having maintained an unbroken literary and friendly intercourse with that amiable and eminent

individual for twenty-seven years, he had peculiar opportunities of estimating his worth. When he reflected on his vast work of a complete English and Chinese dictionary, and his entire version of the Holy Scriptures into the Chinese language, and the important uses of these two great achievements, he could not but consider that such a union of Christian zeal and eminent learning, so usefully devoted to the good of mankind, had rarely, if ever, been exceeded. Sir George concluded by submitting a motion of thanks to Sir Alexander Johnston, which was seconded by James Alexander, Esq. and carried unanimously.

Lieut.-Colonel Sykes suggested, that, as apartments in Somerset House were likely, he understood, to be vacated by another society, he thought an early opportunity of putting in a claim for them should be taken by the Society.

Charles Elliott, Esq. in moving that the thanks of the Society be voted to its venerable director, could not, he said, allow this opportunity to pass without reiterating his expression of extreme regret that ill-health had so long deprived the Society of that gentleman's personal assistance. Seconded by Samuel Dyer, Esq. and carried unanimously.

The Right Hon. Sir Alexander Johnston proposed a vote of thanks to the Right Hon. C. W. Williams Wynn, the president of the Society, which was seconded by Sir George Staunton, and carried unanimously.

Mr. Wynn, in returning thanks, said he really had on so many occasions, during his twelve years' presidentship to the Society, received the kind support of the members, that he could not doubt of that kindness being still continued to him, however feeble might be his efforts to deserve it. He had great pleasure in witnessing the very full attendance here this day; and that fact was itself a powerful argument to shew how desirable it was that the Society should be more advantageously located. Gentlemen would allow him to say, that he felt the importance of this object as strongly as any person; nor had he been wanting in his endeavours to forward it. With respect to the apartments at Somerset House, a representation on behalf of the Society had been made, three or four years ago, to Lord Althorp, and, since that time, very recently to Sir Robert Peel, and he must say that both these parties received the representations in the most favourable manner. However, it seemed to him very doubtful, as regarded the rooms in Somerset House, whether they would not be required as public offices for the use of government. Moreover, it was not at all likely that the apartments in question would be vacated in so short a time as a year, as the new National Gallery would scarcely be completed in that period. He had been assured, that when that time did arrive, the claims of the Asiatic Society would meet with due attention, and would be considered as at least equal to those of any other Society.

After a short eulogium on the late Dr. Morrison and Major-General Hardwicke, whom the Society had lost during the past year, the right honourable gentleman went on to say, that, since the last anniversary, two circumstances had happened, to which he could not help alluding. The one was the publication of the valuable and interesting Travels of Lieut. Burnes, a second edition of which was now before him. The Council of the Society had already presented that gentleman with a diploma as Honorary Resident Member of the Society; and although the value of that presentation was, in a pecuniary view, a trifling matter, it was a distinction which the Society had conferred on Lieut. Burnes alone, and, as such, fully proved its high sense of the merits of that distinguished traveller.

The next circumstance was the mission of Capt. Chesney to investigate the practicability of establishing a communication by steam with India, either by the Euphrates or the Red Sea. If that were done, we should bring India more immediately within our scope; and should then be enabled to communicate and receive an answer to our letters in four months, while now it took at least a year. He also looked to that expedition as being calculated to furnish much valuable informa-

tion on many subjects, as Capt. Chesney was accompanied by several able and scientific coadjutors. He felt we were highly indebted to the late president of the Board of Control, now Lord Glenelg, and to another gentleman, whom he had the pleasure of seeing in the room, Mr. Stuart Mackenzie, for that mission; and, also for the peculiar interest they had shewn in all matters connected with India. The right hon. gentleman concluded by thanking the members for the kind way in which they had voted the thanks of the Society to him; and expressed his hope that he should have the happiness of meeting them at the dinner that evening.

Upon a remark being made by Colonel Sykes, Mr. Wynn observed, that if, as was possible, the museum of the East India Company should be united with the Society's, still greater space would be required; but that he was sanguine, on such an event, accommodation might more readily be procured, and that the Society would then soon be relieved from the present heavy expense it was at for house-rent.

Sir George Staunton said, in allusion to the contending claims of societies, Lord Althorp had expressed his opinion that, if a vacancy should occur in any public building, the claims of the Royal Asiatic Society should have the preference.

Sir Alexander Johnston remarked that, as the Society might be made a powerful auxiliary for the good government of India, its support should be considered by an enlightened government as a matter of the greatest moment.

John Goldie, Esq. moved the thanks of the meeting to the vice-presidents of the Society, which was seconded by Sir Ralph Rice, and carried unanimously.

The Right Hon. Henry Ellis rose to move a vote of thanks to the council, on whose exertions, he said, much of the Society's success depended. In reference to the late Dr. Morrison, Mr. Ellis mentioned an instance which had come under his own observation, and which proved the value of that learned man's labours in a national point of view. On that occasion, a very difficult paper was put before the Doctor, to be translated into Chinese, which he did with as much ease as the draft had been written with, and, he believed, in a perfectly unexceptionable style. He thought that that extraordinary individual deserved some mark of national gratitude.

J. A. Stuart Mackenzie, Esq. in seconding the motion, remarked, that he thought the best method of procuring some public support for the Society would be, to make an application to parliament, and he hoped the right hon. president would undertake to bring the matter before that house. He did not doubt that the claims of this Society, so intimately connected as it was with the future interests of India, would meet with a fair consideration from any government. He took blame to himself, that this should be the first anniversary of the Society at which he attended; — more especially when he remembered how long he had been connected with the Board of Control. It would now, however, be his gratifying duty to endeavour to make up for lost time, by paying in future double attention to the interests of the Society, when he had no longer the honour or advantage of being a member of that board. India and Indian interests must become familiarised every day, more and more, to Englishmen; and this Society could not fail to exercise a most beneficial and essential influence in advancing a more general knowledge of all that was connected with our mighty eastern empire. He felt flattered by the manner in which his name had been noticed by the right hon. president, to whose discretion he wished to see intrusted any motion before parliament which should have reference to this Society and its advancement, when it should receive his best attention. It would always be a source of satisfaction to him to have had his share (however humble) in the inquiry which was carried on last session before a committee of the House of Commons, and which terminated in so liberal a grant of public money as parliament had placed at the disposal of the government, with a view to put to the test of experiment, by

an expedition under Captain Chesney, the practicability of facilitating the communication with India by means of steam-navigation on the river Euphrates;—a measure of the deepest interest and importance to our empire in the east, whether considered in a commercial or political point of view. Whatever might be the issue of this great experiment, he should always be ready to take a full share of responsibility in supporting the grant of public money for this most arduous and interesting enterprise.

The motion was then put from the chair, and carried unanimously.

Andrew Macklew, Esq. proposed that the thanks of the meeting be given to James Alexander, Esq. the Society's treasurer: seconded by Richard Clarke, Esq. and carried unanimously.

Mr. Alexander, in returning thanks, observed, that, as treasurer to the Society, he only wished he could see a solid and regular increase in the revenues of the institution; but truth compelled him to say that at present it was not the case. He did not like the Society trusting to contingencies; he wished it to be able to look every proper object in the face. He thought he saw a prospect of an increase of expenses without a corresponding increase of funds. He, therefore, called upon every gentleman present to use his utmost exertions to augment the income of the Society.

Capt. J. Michael moved a vote of thanks to the secretary of the Society, expressing a hope that it might long enjoy his valuable aid: seconded by Col. Boardman, and carried unanimously.

Capt. Harkness said, he felt highly gratified at the very flattering manner in which his name had this day been mentioned. It would always be a pleasure to him to afford any aid in his power to promote the prosperity of the Society; that aid, indeed, was feeble, and but little deserving the eulogy with which it had been alluded to; but of one thing he was sure — that it was given with a perfect willingness of heart and mind; and, in the same sincerity, he now begged to return his best thanks.

The Right Hon. Chairman submitted to the meeting a recommendation from the council, "that the chairman, for the time being, of the Honourable the Court of Directors of the East India Company, be requested to accept the office of Vice-Patron of the Society."

On the question being put, it was unanimously resolved that the recommendation of the council be adopted.

The Chairman then submitted the following recommendation of the council, "that his Majesty Muhammed Shah, Shahen Shah, King of Persia, and His Highness Mahárájá Runjit Singh, Rájá of the Punjáb, be elected honorary members of the Society."

Carried unanimously.

The meeting then proceeded to ballot for the officers and council for the ensuing year, Henry S. Græme, Esq. and Thomas Newnham, Esq. being nominated scrutineers. On the termination of the ballot, the president announced that all the officers were re-elected, and that the following changes took place in the council:—Sir R. Rice; Sir C. Forbes, Bart.; N. B. Edmonstone, Esq.; Lieut.-Colonel C. J. Doyle; Major Carnac; Colonel Francklin; Major Close; Richard Clarke, Esq.: in the place of the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone; Sir R. H. Inglis, Bart.; W. B. Bayley, Esq.; Lieut.-Colonel Bowler; Lieut.-Colonel W. M. G. Colebrooke; Charles Elliott, Esq.; Richard Jenkins, Esq., and Professor Wilson.

The next General Meeting was announced for the 16th instant.